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Morning Conference on August 9, 1957. Present: The President, John Eisenhower, J. F. Dulles, Gerald Smith, and Robert Cutler.

Disarmament

The following changes in the June 11 U. S. position on a first phase of disarmament were discussed:

1. Paragraph 8 refraining from nuclear tests. The present text provides for a suspension of testing for twelve months, the parties being then free to resume testing unless an adequate system is in effect at the end of the period to police testing and the cut-off procedure is agreed upon (par. 5). The French and the British are in disagreement over this provision. Because there is no identifiable time for the cut-off date, the British are satisfied with the provision because they can go on stockpiling weapons material while the parties argue about a cut-off inspection system. The French, on the other hand, feel they will be prejudiced if the cut-off inspection system discussions are dragged out over a period of years, and wish a more determinable date for the cut-off to be established. Therefore, Moch is anxious to have the period for suspension of testing last no longer than eighteen months unless a fixed cut-off date is agreed to during the period tests are suspended.

The President suggested that the U. S. should announce that it would be willing to suspend for 24 months (twice the present period) provided that at the end of that time inspection systems both for testing and for cut-off were established and in operation (and a cut-off date fixed), or testing would be resumed. He also suggested that the period of suspension might be extended beyond 24 months by unanimous agreement. Of course, if there was a violation of the testing suspension either party could begin testing again.

2. Minor disarmament considerations will be brought up later before the President, but were mentioned as follows:

(a) The provision that after the cut-off date no country could transfer to another country fissionable material (par. 7).

(b) The provision for notification for the movement of troops across land, sea, or air boundaries (par. 14-a). The French and the U. K. object because they feel the need of moving troops to places like Algeria or Oman, thus disclosing their hand; whereas, movements within the Communist Bloc land mass would not raise the same question.

*NSC Review Completed *

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(c) The provision relative to the control commission establishing a system to regulate the traffic in armaments (par. 14-b). The French and British wish to limit this to a study of such a system.

(d) The provision relative to the use of nuclear weapons (par. 4). The British and French fear that our language waters down the desired deterrent effect of nuclear weapons. They have suggested language to the effect that weapons could be used if one of the parties faced a situation requiring the use of weapons to defend itself against armed attack. They do not want the use of weapons limited to repelling aggression. They think that to be too narrow.

Afternoon Conference on August 9, 1957. Present: The President, John Eisenhower, J. F. Dulles, Admiral Strauss, Gerald Smith, and Robert Cutler.

1. Admiral Strauss explained the difficulties of a two-year period of suspension because top scientists would be lost to AEC if there were to be new tests and experiments over such a long period. The President thought the world situation was so difficult that attention should not be paid to this point.

2. Admiral Strauss introduced the thought that we could announce (and the British would join with us) that in our future tests we would not add any net increase in fissionable material in the air -- i. e., putting in only additional fissionable material to make up for the decay of previously exploded fissionable material.

3. The President noted that he was prepared to suggest the willingness of the U. S. to announce that it would suspend for 2½ months as indicated in the second paragraph of (1) in the Morning Conference report. Admiral Strauss said that if that was the President's decision, the AEC would certainly abide by it and work under it. (The President mentioned that Defense was not represented, and I subsequently suggested to Gerald Smith that a short memorandum of the three Presidential decisions taken this afternoon be made by him and gone over with Strauss and Quarles before any public announcement in London of the disarmament point.)

Robert Cutler

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Addition to General Cutler's memorandum on Disarmament, dated
August 9, 1957

The President was concerned that world opinion understand the United States position on continuing tests while striving for a disarmament agreement including test suspension. It was important, appropriately in time and manner, to announce that we would work unceasingly for a safeguarded disarmament agreement, including suspension of tests under conditions described above in this memorandum, but that it would take a year before multilateral agreement therefor could become effective. Until that time, the United States would continue as heretofore to test, especially to achieve clean devices. He felt a frank statement to this effect would provide flexibility and help with world opinion. Such announcement should be worked up by State, Defense, and AEC. It was not clear to me whether this announcement would accompany or follow the 24-month proposal.

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